

DUNCLUG PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWCOMER POLICY

Statement of Aims

Dunclug Primary School is committed to making appropriate provision of teaching and resources for Newcomer Pupils. We believe that cultural and linguistic diversity is a rich resource for the whole school, and that pupils' achievement is linked to a welcoming environment in which they feel valued and confident. The school will identify individual pupil's needs, recognise the skills they bring to school and ensure equality of access to the curriculum.

We aim to ensure that all Newcomer pupils are able to:

- Use English confidently and competently.
- Access the curriculum and the wider environment through the English language.
- Where appropriate, build on and make use of their knowledge of other languages and cultures.

What is a 'newcomer' pupil?

During recent years, schools in the north of Ireland have been experiencing a steady growth in their enrolment of children from various parts of the world who are therefore used to different languages and cultures. It is important that all children feel welcome in our schools and are supported as they get used to their new surroundings and to learning a new language.

The term 'newcomer' is used to refer a pupil who does not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum and does not have a language in common with the teacher.

Why is it important to have children classed as 'newcomers'?

This enables schools to support children and parents better. The school may be entitled to more funding and, they can get help from the Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS). IDS are set up specifically to help schools, parents and pupils work together to support the needs of a newcomer pupil.

How do schools decide if a child is a newcomer?

Schools must ensure that the pupils meet certain criteria. If they do, schools may record them as a newcomer on their annual school census. Schools are responsible each year for checking if a pupil still meets the newcomer criteria. Each year the child's progress will be improving as they learn a new language and fully integrate into the education system and the term newcomer may no longer be appropriate

Key Principles for Additional Language Acquisition

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and planned for, with attention both to initial access and to extension.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understandings cannot always be assumed but need to be explored. Teachers have a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- The focus and use of additional support is to meet the curricular and linguistic needs of the pupil.
- All pupils have entitlement to the Revised Curriculum.
- A distinction is made between Newcomer Pupils and Special Educational Needs.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of pupils' home languages and to build on their existing knowledge and skills. In the early stages in particular, pupils may be encouraged to record and use their home language. Many concepts and skills depend on and benefit from well-developed home language and literacy in home language enhances subsequent acquisition of English.

- All languages, dialects, accents and cultures are equally valued.

Teaching and Learning

Planning and Differentiation:

The school expects staff to share planning with support staff. Plans will identify the demands of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and provide differentiated opportunities matched to individual pupils' needs. Key language features, which are necessary for effective participation, are identified. These might be key words, certain patterns of grammar, uses of language or forms of text.

Literacy and Numeracy:

Classroom activities are carefully structured and focused to take account of the range of purposes as contained in the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Classroom activities have clear learning objectives and appropriate support and resources are deployed to ensure that pupils are able to participate in lessons. Seating arrangements and group work should ensure that Newcomer Pupils have access to strong English language peer models

Strategies

Staff use support strategies to ensure curriculum access:

- Collaborative group work
- Enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening
- Effective role models of speaking, reading and writing
- Additional verbal support-repetition, alternative phrasing, peer support
- Additional visual support, e.g. posters, objects, non-verbal clues, pictures, demonstration, use of gesture, etc. Bilingual resources, e.g. dictionaries, on-line support, bilingual pupils, texts, key word lists.
- Writing frames, directed activities related to texts
- Opportunities for role play
- Pupils receive regular feedback from staff

- Opportunities are taken to focus on the cultural knowledge explicit or implicit in texts
- Discussion is provided before and during reading and writing activities
- Where possible, learning progression moves from concrete to abstract
- Further support for pupils' English language development is provided outside the formal curriculum, e.g. in assemblies, school clubs, etc.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Information is gathered about:

- the pupils' linguistic background and competence in other languages
- the pupils' previous educational and schooling experience
- the pupils' family and biographical background

Teachers regularly observe, assess and record information about pupils' developing use of language using the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Whilst account is taken of English language development for Newcomer Pupils, the school aims to set appropriate and challenging targets for individual pupils. These targets are reviewed on a regular basis

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Pupils

Dunclug Primary School recognises that most Newcomer Pupils do not have SEN needs. However, should SEN needs be identified during assessment; Newcomer pupils will have equal access to school SEN provision. Similarly, Dunclug Primary School recognises that there may be Newcomer pupils who are gifted or talented even though they may not be fully fluent in English.

Assessment and Record Keeping

- All Newcomer pupils' English language acquisition is mandatorily recorded on the Newcomer pro-forma sent by the Education Authority.
- Staff have regular liaison to discuss pupil progress, needs and targets.

- Assessment methods are checked for cultural bias and action is taken to remove any bias that is identified.
- The school analyses the achievement of Newcomer Pupils and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of additional support provided in terms of pupil progress.

Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We provide a welcoming admission process for the induction, assessment and support of new arrival pupils and their families/carers.

We aim to ensure that our written and spoken communication with families and with the community is effective through the use of plain English, interpreters and where available, translated letters and documents.

Staff Development

The school will enable all staff to undertake professional development to ensure that provision for Newcomer pupils is appropriately delivered and co-ordinated. We have had volunteers to help with teaching newcomers the English language this year.

Review and Evaluation of Policy

School data will include relevant information about Newcomer Pupils. This will include needs, level of English, support, achievement and progress. This will enable the school to monitor targets.

The evaluation process will serve the basis for planning programmes of action and targeting time, support and resources.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Learning Support Co-Ordinator in consultation with the rest of the staff and Board of Governors.

Reviewed March 2020.

Mrs Boyd